

**USCodex**

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**From:** Tricia Wilson [triciaw#064#superserveco.com.au%INTER@hq.usda.gov] 0338 99 JUN 4 19:39  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 18, 1999 10:34 PM  
**To:** USCodex@dchqexs1.hqnet.usda.gov  
**Sensitivity:** Personal

Mr Robert Lake

At the outset, I would like to say that this is the first time in my life that I have written to an international body over concerns about policy. I hope that makes it plain that I, and in discussions with many Australians, my fellow citizens take this matter very seriously. I do not belong to any lobby group or political party.

I am writing concerning labeling of foods containing genetically engineered/modified ingredients.

I have great difficulty with the North American position that such labeling should not be enforceable and that any country that attempts to do so be considered in breach of trade agreements. Every country has its own culture and beliefs. Our democratic rights to protect ourselves and what we eat, drink and breathe should be determined by our own democratic processes, not imposed under external pressure. There has been considerable scientific debate about genetically modified foods of late. For me, the jury is definitely still out on the safety of these products both to consumers, the environment, and the economies of developing countries. While this is the case, I strongly object to having my right to choose what I consume dictated by bodies overseas.

I would also point out that there is considerable hypocrisy in the American position. They are comfortable about subsidising wheat production and other farm products which as far as I am concerned disadvantages efficient Australian producers. So far, the WTO has allowed that 'restraint on trade'. In this context, it would seem highly biased and unjustified to not support labelling.

I would urge Codex to support the right of each country to (a) determine whether they will label genetically modified foods and (b) to insist that imports state whether they contain genetically modified ingredients.

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